4-13-1955

Statement on Tenth Anniversary of Death of Franklin D. Roosevelt

Strom Thurmond

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Recommended Citation
Thurmond, Strom, "Statement on Tenth Anniversary of Death of Franklin D. Roosevelt" (1955). Strom Thurmond Collection, Mss100. 1321. 
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STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND ON TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, APRIL 13, 1955.

Mr. President, I would like to add a few words to the comments being made here today about Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

History has recorded the stories of but few men who accomplished so much on behalf of their fellowmen in so short a time as did President Roosevelt. History has recorded virtually no story of accomplishment against such odds. The odds which Franklin D. Roosevelt had to overcome were fantastic in every respect.

He had the tremendous problem of his personal health. He fought as the real fighter he was to work valiantly for his country in spite of his braces and wheelchair. Until his death, many Americans were not aware of the great physical handicap under which Mr. Roosevelt had worked throughout his years as President.

No other Chief Executive had ever faced a more serious domestic situation than he did when he took the oath of the Presidency. Millions were jobless, homeless and hungry. There was little prospect of better times.

And, although we did not know it at that time, we were soon to realize the seriousness of the world situation — the danger of the dictators. Gradually that shadow of responsibility was to envelope President Roosevelt and place upon him even greater burdens than those of physical handicap and domestic crisis.

But Franklin D. Roosevelt was a man of decision and a man of action. He sought and obtained measures appropriate to those days of domestic crisis to relieve the common man and to provide him an opportunity for the future. The President drafted the
experts of government and business to work out with him the multitudinous problems of the early thirties. His programs took Americans off their backs and put them back on their feet. He designed programs to meet the need of a particular time.

Although President Roosevelt had hoped the nations of the world would be able to quarantine aggressors, he was decisive in his actions to protect our nation and our allies when he realized we had to fight for peace or lose it.

It is true that President Roosevelt was a controversial figure even before his death. Even his closest adherents did not agree with all his policies which were conceived in the heat of economic battles at home and military action abroad.

Only history can make the final estimate of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his contribution to his fellowmen, but none can doubt that the Age of Roosevelt will always be recorded as one of the most important periods in the growth of our nation.

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